

hectare, then their share in the total production of paddy increases to 26.8%. As a result, the contribution of these States to the total foodgrains production increases from 6.2% to 7.4%, i.e., an additional 13.75 million tonnes. It is to this extent that the increased yield of paddy in the above States improves the overall availability of foodgrains in the country.

To increase production of paddy, the Government is implementing a major Centrally Sponsored Scheme called "Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Rice Based Cropping System Areas (ICDP-Rice)". Under the scheme, assistance is provided on 90:10 per cent basis between the Government of India and the State Governments, especially for production and distribution of seeds. Further, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed more than 700 high yielding varieties and 28 hybrids suitable for different agro-climatic conditions. Frontline demonstrations are also organized by ICAR on farmers' fields on 100% Central Government assistance for transfer of technology. A minimum price guarantee is also provided to the paddy growers through the price support mechanism.

Coverage of crops under NAIS

*359. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the crops presently covered in Andhra Pradesh under the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS);

(b) whether the State Government has sought the intervention of the Central Government to include certain other perennial crops in the scheme;

(c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto and whether Government would consider to accord sanction for the above proposals;

(d) the reasons why a farmer particularly a marginal farmer, usually hesitates to undertake as insurance cover under NAIS and what hassles he has to face; and

(e) the steps the Central Government would take to help the farmers and make NAIS more acceptable and farmer friendly?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Crops covered in Andhra Pradesh under National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) during Rabi 2005-06 and Kharif 2006 are given in the enclosed Statement (See below).

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The State Government of Andhra Pradesh had sought inclusion of oil palm crop under NAIS. The State Government was informed that perennial horticultural crops like palm oil are not included at present in view of multi-picking nature of yield and non-availability of adequate past yield data. However, Agricultural Insurance Company of India Ltd. (AIC) is in the process of studying the feasibility/modalities for coverage of perennial crops.

(d) Benefit of insurance coverage is available to all categories of farmers including marginal farmers. To encourage small and marginal farmers, they are paid premium subsidy which is at present, 10% of the premium. However, over a period of implementation of NAIS, it has been *inter-alia* observed that: payment of insurance claims is sometime delayed, assessment of losses made due to larger unit area of insurance, unattractive threshold yield and indemnity level, non-coverage of prevented sowing risk/post harvest losses.

(e) Keeping in view the limitations of the scheme a Joint Group was constituted by the Government to study the improvements required in the existing crop insurance scheme and to make it more farmers friendly. The Group has made indepth study and submitted its report. The important recommendations made by the Group are in respect of reducing the unit area of insurance to Gram Panchayat for major crops, improving the basis of calculation of threshold yield, higher indemnity level of 80% and 90%; coverage of pre-sowing/planting risks and post-harvest losses and making 'on account' payment of crop losses etc. Based on the recommendations of the Joint Group, the Government is in the process of revising the present scheme.

Statement

Crops covered in Andhra Pradesh under National Agricultural Insurance Scheme

Rabi 2005-06 season

Food Crops/Oilseeds	Annual Comm./Hort. Crops
Paddy, Jowar (UI), Maize, Ragi, Sesamum, Bengal Gram, Greengram, Horsegram, Groundnut, Blackgram, Sunflower	Onion, Red-Chillies, Mango

Kharif 2006 season

Food Crops/Oilseeds	Annual Comm./Hort. Crops
Paddy, Bajra, Black gram, Castor, Redgram, Sunflower, Sesamum, Greengram, Groundnut (Irrigated), Groundnut (unirrigated), Jower, Maize, Soyabean (2 Districts)	Cotton (irrigated), Cotton (unirrigated), Banana (unirrigated), Sugarcane (plant), Sugarcane (ratoon), Sunflower, Chilly (irrigated), Chilly (unirrigated)

Damage to ozone layer due to refrigerators and A.C. machines

*360. SHRI SK. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the use of refrigerators and A.C. machines is on the increase;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the increased use of these machines is harming the ozone layer; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government to save the ozone layer?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA):

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) India is party to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. India has prepared a country programme as required under the Protocol to phase out the production and consumption of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS). In terms of the Ozone Depleting Substances (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000, which is part of the country programme, use of Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) which damage the Ozone Layer in Refrigerators and Mobile Air-conditioners has been phased out from 1.1.2003. In Air-conditioners, Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) is used, which has low Ozone Depleting Potential and which will be phased out by 1.1.2040 in terms of the Decisions under the Multilateral Montreal Protocol.